

Georgia Hunting Action Plan

Strategies for Recruiting, Retaining, and Reactivating Hunters
Fall 2016



The *National Hunting & Shooting Sports Action Plan*, *Georgia Hunting Action Plan*, and the appendices referenced herein, can be viewed or downloaded at www.NationalR3Plan.com.

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PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP MEMBERS

Charles S. Evans, Author

National Wild Turkey Federation

Louis Cole

Safari Club International

(GA Chapter)

Matt Dunfee

Wildlife Management Institute

Hank Forester

Quality Deer Management Association

Tina Johannsen

Georgia Department of Natural Resources (Wildlife Resources Division)

Lynn Lewis-Weis

National Wild Turkey Federation

Eric Wallace

Safari Club International

(Atlanta Chapter)

Mike Worley

Georgia Wildlife Federation

KEY TERMS/ACRONYMS

Agency: State and federal wildlife or natural resources management governmental organizations

CAHSS: Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports

Churn rate: Proportion of hunting license buyers who choose not purchase a license in a given time period

GA DNR-WRD: Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division

GWF: Georgia Wildlife Federation

Industry: For profit organizations who support hunting and the shooting sports and who have a vested interest in the excise tax conservation funding model

Locavore: Person who is motivated to eat food that is grown, raised, produced, or harvested locally

Millennial: Person in the generation born between the early 1980s and 2000s (individuals between 18 – 34 years of age)

NGO: Non-governmental organization whose mission is focused on conservation, shooting sports, or both

NWTF: National Wild Turkey Federation

ORAM: Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model

PR: Pittman-Robertson - Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937

QDMA: Quality Deer Management Association

R3: Recruitment, retention, and reactivation of hunting and shooting sports participants

SCI: Safari Club International

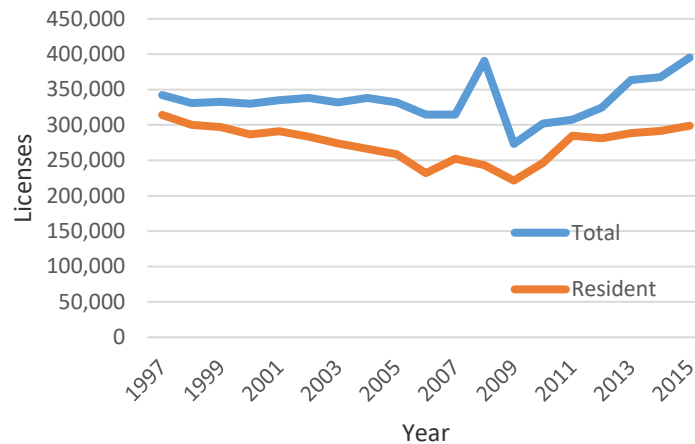
Stakeholder: Organization/individual with a vested interest in hunting or shooting sports

INTRODUCTION

A nationwide general decline in hunting participation since the 1980s has resulted in the leaders in the conservation community coming together, recognizing the gravity of the situation, and making a serious shift in the way they are tackling the issue. The *National Hunting & Shooting Sports Action Plan* (hereafter, “national plan”) was recently released by the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports (CAHSS) to prioritize strategies and actions for increasing support and participation in hunting and shooting sports.

Representatives from Georgia have been members of the national plan development workgroup since its formation. Like much of the nation, Georgia has documented a gradual decline in hunting participation. Thankfully, Georgia has seen a steady increase since 2009. However, hunters still only make up about 6% of the Georgia population with even fewer buying a license every year. Given that sportsmen and women in Georgia sustain a

multi-billion-dollar industry and provide the primary financial support for wildlife conservation, the general downward trend in hunting participation and lack of consistent license buying pose an ever-increasing threat to conservation.



The number of Georgia hunting licenses (total and resident) on a yearly basis from 1997 to 2015.

This downward trend prompted the development of recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3) efforts by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division (GA DNR-WRD), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and industry with a vested interest in promoting hunting and the shooting sports. While Georgia has excellent programs in existence, they share many of the same inefficiencies seen in the majority of the R3 programs currently being implemented in the nation. Despite substantial resources devoted towards these efforts, coordination and evaluation have been minimal and their effectiveness is generally unknown.

Under the direction of the national plan, the Georgia R3 Coordinator was hired via a cooperative agreement (GA DNR-WRD, Georgia Wildlife Federation [GWF], National Wild Turkey Federation [NWTF], Quality Deer Management Association [QDMA], and Safari Club International [SCI]) to conduct a sample inventory of R3 programs in the state, write a strategic state-specific version of the national plan for Georgia, and assist with pilot development, implementation, and evaluation of R3 strategies in the state. The following *Georgia Hunting Action Plan* (hereafter, “plan”) will provide guidance and structure for partnerships and R3 strategies that can effectively meet the needs of new audiences who are interested in hunting and

shooting sports. The purpose of the plan is to identify, coordinate, and focus local and national resources available for R3 in Georgia. Implementing the recommendations within this plan will help secure the future of hunting traditions and the natural resources they conserve.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan are Georgia specific, two-fold, and dependent on each other:

- 1) To increase participation in hunting and shooting sports as they relate to hunting.
- 2) To increase societal acceptance and support of hunting and shooting sports.

Nationwide and in Georgia, shooting sports have seen increases in participation in recent years. When compared to hunting, participating in shooting sports is much less complex. Shooting is easily scheduled, there are no restricted seasons, and one quality trial opportunity can easily provide a potential participant the skills they need to begin shooting on their own. Hunting, on the other hand, involves a greater level of skills development, trial, mentorship, and expense (in both time and money). Due to the booming participation in shooting sports versus hunting and the complexity of creating a hunter, this plan will primarily target hunting participation. However, this plan recognizes the importance of shooting sports and the role they play in the process an individual goes through to become a hunter. This is why, in addition to hunting, the recommendations found within this plan will include shooting sports as they relate to hunting.



A participant receiving crossbow training in a Georgia R3 pilot program targeting locavores.

Photo: Charles S. Evans.

CURRENT STANDING

The objectives set forth are broad and will be challenging to achieve. To understand the actions needed to accomplish these objectives first requires an understanding of the current standing of hunting and R3 efforts in Georgia, as well as what previous R3 research has shown. Highlights from the literature review and inventory are provided below and will be expanded upon in the strategies.

The Good

- Hunting and recreational shooting are constitutionally protected in Georgia and significantly contribute to the state's economy and wildlife resources.
- Recent trends in Georgia have documented large increases in millennial participants in hunting which may serve to mitigate the overall aging hunter demographic.
- The GA DNR-WRD offers an apprentice license which may reduce barriers by allowing interested individuals to try hunting before they have to take a hunter education course. Additionally, hunter education can now be completed entirely online which may further reduce barriers.
- In the United States, hunting has high approval from the general public for community-centric reasons (control/manage wildlife causing damage to people/ecosystems) and obtaining local, free-range meat.
- Georgia contains fairly good public access to hunting and recreational shooting opportunities, with the exception of urban areas.
- There is substantial support and effort currently being directed to R3 efforts in Georgia.

The Bad

- There is a high churn rate in Georgia hunters, resulting in low license revenue and a resultant inability for GA DNR-WRD to capture its maximum allocation of Pittman-Robertson (PR) funds.
- The majority of hunters and non-hunters in the nation (and likely Georgia) are not aware of how conservation work is funded.
- The R3 efforts in Georgia tend to operate within organizational silos and most cater to youth or spouses of the existing base of hunters.
- There is a significant lack of structure (targeted approaches), metrics to gauge success, and evaluation for R3 efforts (do not know what effect efforts are having, if any).

R3 STRATEGIES

The national plan defines the barriers or threats that may be preventing hunting and shooting sports participation. It also presents the strategies and action items needed to address those threats. Action items for this Georgia-specific plan were formed by 1) restructuring the pertinent action items mentioned in the national plan to make them applicable to Georgia, 2) conducting a literature review, program inventory, and workgroup meetings to identify unique Georgia specific R3 needs and required actions, and 3) hosting the 2016 Georgia R3 Summit to receive input from stakeholders on the proposed action items. A summary of the summit and input received can be found in Appendix I.

Updating the plan

This plan and the recommendations herein are intended to be a living document. As the Georgia R3 Initiative evolves and these action items are piloted, new recommendations will be developed. Reported progress from stakeholders at the Georgia R3 Summit each year will be used to update this plan annually.

Implementation

Implementation of the suggested actions will be conducted by the Georgia R3 Coordinator, stakeholders, and committees. The exact timeline for implementation of each action item will be a function of capacity of the implementing organizations/committees and support they receive.

Note: The following strategies are not organized in priority as many will need to be implemented concurrently.



Stakeholders evaluating R3 programs at the 2016 Georgia R3 Summit.

Photo: Thomas Jones.

Strategy 1: Improve cooperation and direction among R3 partners

Justification: Hunting participation has become a high priority among agencies, NGOs, and industry⁶ resulting in an impressive amount of effort being devoted to conducting R3 events. However, many of these events are being conducted within organizational silos with the need for coordination among stakeholders going unrecognized and undervalued. Previous research has revealed that the resources and partnerships needed to conduct effective R3 programs are spread across numerous stakeholders.¹ In order to begin implementing the action items detailed in the following sections, coordination between stakeholders in a targeted and strategic manner must be increased. Without a partnership-based R3 initiative, efforts will likely result in inefficient use of resources, duplication of efforts, and questionable outcomes.¹

In Short: To be successful in Georgia, we need a partnership-based, state R3 initiative.

1) Action: *Maintain a statewide R3 Coordinator position.*

Implementation: Cooperative funding from stakeholders

Tasks:

- Serve as the main point of contact for all R3 stakeholders on the design, implementation, and evaluation of R3 strategies and programs.
- Facilitate stakeholder partnerships and host the annual R3 Summit.
- Maintain an updated version of this plan and ensure strategies are up-to-date and programs evolve according to new information.
- Assist with the implementation of pilot programs and execution of action items.
- Assist with public relations, outreach, and media coverage.

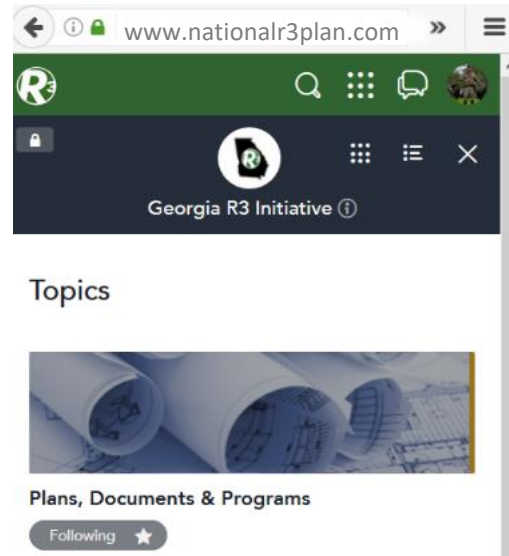
2) Action: *Host an annual R3 summit for agency, NGO, and industry stakeholders.*

Implementation: R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

- Expand the stakeholder base to include more partners and potentially invite constituents (locavores, teachers, etc.) to provide outside perspective.
- Disseminate current terminology, information, goals, direction, and successes for R3 in Georgia.
- Encourage implementation of the strategies and evaluation processes detailed in this plan.
- Increase partnerships among R3 stakeholders and remove the organizational silo approach to R3.

- Allow time for committees to meet in person and facilitate cross-pollination among committees where needed.
- Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to self-evaluate their R3 success and effectiveness. Guided self-evaluation will encourage organizations to implement adapted or new efforts that have proven efficient and identify ways to improve inefficient efforts. Self-evaluation will include mapping R3 programs using the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model (ORAM) to identify gaps and improve connectivity.¹
- Use the feedback and information about evolving efforts shared at this meeting to keep an annually updated version of this plan which will be hosted on the national R3 website within the Georgia R3 Initiative group.



The national R3 website (www.NationalR3Plan.com) has a private group for Georgia stakeholders to access documents, share ideas, and stay current on R3 successes.

Strategy 2: Improve societal acceptance of hunting and shooting

Justification: While growth in hunting participation has been documented in recent years, hunters represent an extremely small segment, making up only about 6% of the total population in Georgia. Hunting participation is likely adversely affected by negative public perceptions. The future acceptance of hunting by the non-hunting community is critical to sustaining the hunting tradition.^{8,11} Fostering social acceptance is an essential first step in increasing the recruitment of hunters from non-traditional demographics.¹⁸ Current research indicates that at the national level, 17-19% of the United States population currently hunt or have hunted, 23-30% would consider hunting, and 53-57% would never go hunting.^{2,24} However, hunting has the approval of 61-79% of the American public.^{2,4} Non-hunters and potential hunters had higher approval of hunting for community-centric reasons (control/manage wildlife causing damage to people/ecosystems) or obtaining local, free-range meat, rather than hunter-centric reasons (spend time with loved ones, be close to nature, and obtain a trophy).² Similar results were found in a nationwide survey where 80% of Americans approved of hunting for the meat or community-centric reasons.¹⁴

It is paramount that active hunters understand their responsibilities to the continuation of hunting. Without societal acceptance of hunting by the American public, R3 success will be limited.^{5,18} Lack of conservation funding awareness is a large issue nationally as only 30% of hunters are aware of PR funds and 45% are aware that revenue from license purchases goes

toward conservation.¹² Increasing conservation funding awareness among hunters and non-hunters will likely increase societal acceptance of hunting as a whole. Additionally, while conservation is not the main motivation of license purchasing, hunters are significantly more likely to purchase a license if they know the money is going back into conservation.¹² In Georgia, a study among apprentice license buyers found that 67% would be more likely to purchase a license if they knew the GA DNR-WRD receives the majority of its funding from license sales and PR.¹⁶

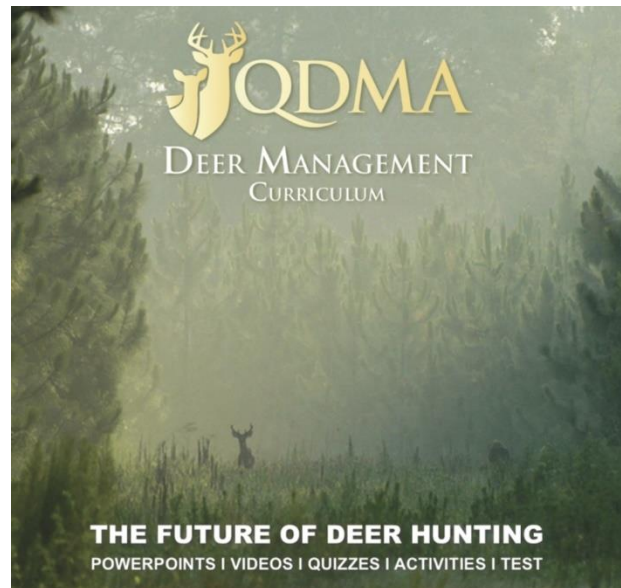
In short: A precursor to increasing hunting participation is creating broader societal acceptance of hunting by nonparticipants. If hunting and shooting sports are regarded as safe, legitimate, and culturally relevant activities by a majority of the Georgia public, new and nontraditional audiences may be more willing to participate and/or provide social support.

3) Action: *Incorporate conservation and hunting in K-12 classrooms.*

Implementation: Education Committee

Tasks:

- Expand teacher conservation workshops and determine if there is a need for more environmental education staff.
- Facilitate the incorporation of packaged curriculum in classrooms (especially in urban/suburban areas).
 - Include public schools, home-schooling groups, and Georgia Independent School Association.
 - Include the history of conservation, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, and the role of hunters and shooters in wildlife conservation.
 - Investigate the potential of hunter education and firearm safety training as sanctioned school activities (potential industry or NGO sponsorship).



An example of existing packaged curriculum available to teachers.

- 4) Action:** *Marketing campaigns for both hunters and non-hunters targeted at increasing positive exposure to and acceptance of hunting and shooting sports.*

Implementation: Marketing Committee

Tasks:

- Include mainstream media on contact lists for hunting and shooting sports events.
- Produce marketing that may include:
 - **Targeting general public:** Mainstream video clips, commercials, and social media campaigns to increase awareness of the benefits of hunting and shooting.
 - **Targeting hunters:** Articles and media blasts aimed at hunters to educate them on how conservation is funded, advocate for the responsible use of public lands by hunters and shooters, and encourage understanding of nontraditional demographics to create a more inclusive culture.
- Ideas for the consideration of the committee:
 - Testimonial stories that show non-hunter perspectives of hunting programs that benefit society (e.g., Hunters for the Hungry – an underprivileged family talking about the assistance received).
 - Conservation land that has been preserved by hunter dollars and the opportunities available in these areas.
 - “How I became a Hunter?” on Georgia Outdoors. Provide stories about how they became involved in the outdoors and conservation.
 - GA DNR-WRD promoting all hunting events and activities available throughout the state.
 - Retailers to feature the excise tax payers in the state as “wildlife champions.”
 - “Eat local, hunt” campaign.

Strategy 3: Reduce churn rate

Justification: A recent study found that only 14.3% of Georgia resident hunters purchased a license six out of six years while 45.4% only bought a license one out of every six years.¹⁹ Women, millennials, and hunters in urban neighborhoods are less likely to be consistent license buyers.^{19,21}

In short: Inconsistent license buying is a large issue from a funding and retention standpoint. It reduces revenue from license sales as well as federal money received by Georgia, which directly affects the quality and quantity of public sporting opportunities.

Purchase frequency	Hunters	
	#	%
1 of 6 years	232,300	45.35
2 of 6 years	98,780	19.28
3 of 6 years	73,059	14.26
4 of 6 years	55,280	10.79
5 of 6 years	52,816	10.31
6 of 6 years	73,369	14.32

The hunting license purchase frequency of Georgia resident hunters.¹⁹

5) Action: *Identify what assistance lapsed Georgia hunters need in order to continue hunting on yearly basis.*

Implementation: R3 Coordinator and GA DNR-WRD

Tasks:

- Conduct focus groups made up of lapsed hunters to identify what actions (not already included in this plan) may serve to mitigate lapse in the future.

6) Action: *Implement marketing strategies aimed at reducing churn rates of existing hunters.*

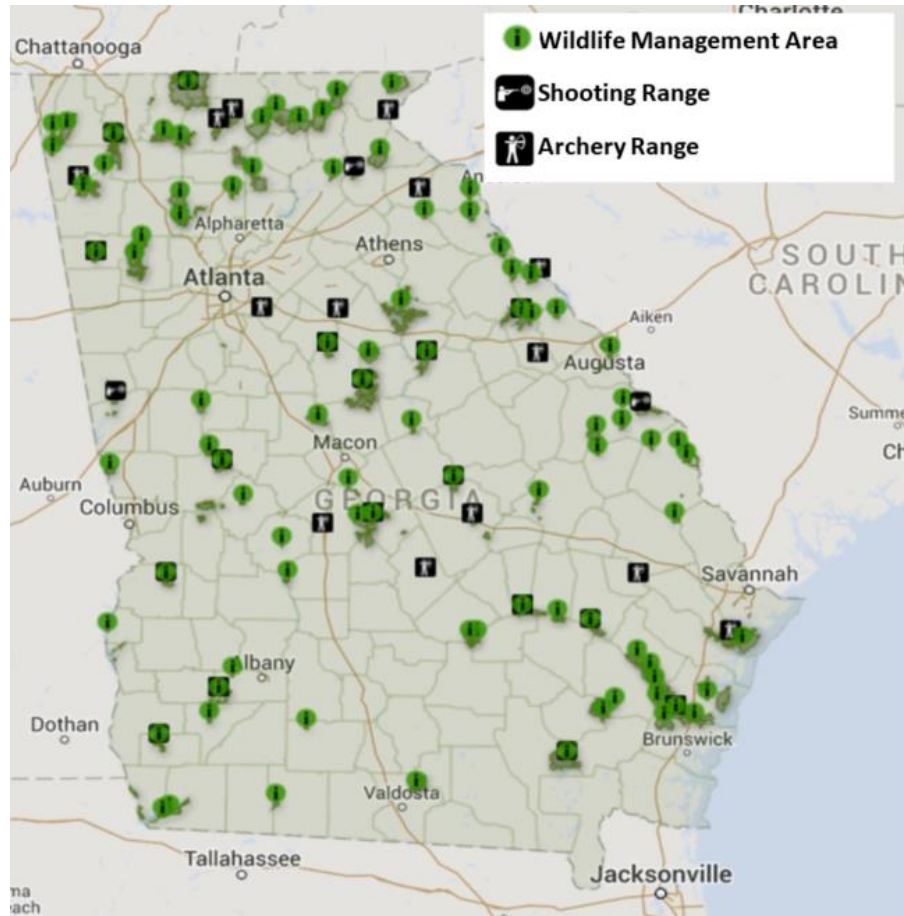
Implementation: Marketing Committee

Tasks:

- Email retention campaigns:
 - Hunting license renewal reminder (GA DNR-WRD is currently conducting research on this method).
 - How-to videos and encourage hunting another species (i.e., buy another license).
- Clearly define the rules and regulations (potential legislative changes).
- Make the GA DNR-WRD website more user-friendly.
- Restructure license system to facilitate ease of purchase (e.g., packaged licensing, auto-renewal, increased loyalty discounts, family licensing).

Strategy 4: Improve access to hunting and shooting areas

Justification: Georgia offers public hunting opportunities on over one million acres, including 102 state-managed wildlife management areas. Public access for shooting sports includes 17 shooting ranges and 16 archery ranges. The private sector offers additional shooting opportunities with approximately 145 shooting ranges and 35 archery ranges across the state.¹⁰ Nationally, access is a reoccurring complaint of many current hunters/shooters.^{13,14} Lack of access and/or knowledge of access will limit R3 given that it will be difficult to recruit a hunter with no access within 50 miles of their home.¹⁹



Public access wildlife management areas, shooting ranges, and archery ranges in Georgia.

Increasing access and knowledge of both public and private hunting opportunities will be critical to the success of R3.

Promoting the existing access will be equally as important as creating new access because most new participants likely lack knowledge about how to find hunting areas. Additionally, access to places to target shoot is important to sustaining both shooting sports and hunting. In fact, feedback from participant focus groups indicates that firearm or archery safety is important for individuals to master before other R3 interactions can be effective.¹

In short: Hunting and recreational shooting access in Georgia needs to increase, and R3 efforts need to improve the linking of participants to access opportunities that are currently available.

7) Action: *Increase shooting sports opportunities on public and private land.*

Implementation: Shooting Sports Committee

Tasks:

- Increase the number of ranges that provide shooting opportunities that are relevant to hunting (e.g., 100yd rifle, shotgun, 3D archery), especially near urban areas.
- Use partnerships to open more opportunity on existing ranges (e.g., extended hours, inclusive of competition level shooting, archery).
- Increase range marketing and consider hiring a shooting range coordinator.
- Support legislation that reduces restrictions on discharge of firearms and archery equipment in urban areas and restrictions on range development.
- Compile existing resources and best practices into a range development guide (how to get started, regulations, available grants, etc.) for any organization/individual interested in starting a range and host this information on the GA DNR-WRD website.

8) Action: *Identify public lands that do not provide adequate hunting opportunities and work with land managers to allow hunting opportunities.*

Implementation: Land Committee

Tasks:

- Identify underutilized public land that could offer hunting opportunities (e.g., UGA forestry and agricultural properties, local municipality and county land especially in urban/suburban areas).
- Target a few of the identified areas to open hunting access, document the process and results, and then use as a model to apply to other public lands.

9) Action: *Improve access to maps and information about public hunting/shooting opportunities.*

Implementation: Land Committee

Tasks:

- Make the GA DNR-WRD website user-friendly with an interactive map of all public hunting/shooting opportunities and their respective dates/regulations (include federal lands).
- Increase the capacity of the Outdoors GA App and incorporate the interactive map.

10) Action: *Promote private hunting opportunities.*

Implementation: Land Committee

Tasks:

- Create or promote existing informational media detailing how to find/start hunting leases and how to gain general hunting permissions on private property.
- Direct participants to an existing (or create a new) online forum/database to connect people who are interested in joining or starting a hunting lease (e.g., Georgia Outdoor News forum “Leases and Land Management”).
- Identify large land holding entities, determine what percentage of their land is leased for recreational purposes, and if portions have gone unleased, investigate ways to resolve.
- Consider creating R3 endorsed private lands covered by insurance and make available for a limited time to new hunters that have completed an R3 program (potentially use Voluntary Public Access funds).



Participants in a learn to hunt program on United States Army Corps of Engineers property that was previously underutilized, but opened additional opportunities for hunting under a partnership agreement with the NWTF.

Photo: Charles S. Evans.

Strategy 5: Add evaluation and outcome tracking to all R3 programs

Justification: There is considerable effort and money being directed toward R3, but a general absence of guidance and evaluation regarding the effectiveness of those efforts.³ This has resulted in unknown and likely limited program effectiveness and an overall lack of innovative ideas that are essential to the growth of hunting participation.

Evaluation is not something simply done at the end of a program as an afterthought, it must be designed into the program from the beginning. Integral to all R3 efforts should be a set of measurable objectives and outcomes that guide design of an evaluation system to document the effort's effect on hunting participation, and identify areas for improvement. The information gathered from evaluation will allow Georgia to conduct data-driven R3 programs aimed at outcomes (e.g., the number of people that continue to hunt after attending events) rather than outputs (e.g., the number of people who attend events).

In short: Evaluation and tracking need to increase to maintain a data driven approach which will show the results of R3 efforts (e.g., efficacy) and allow improvement or re-direction.

- 11) Action:** *Develop and regularly update a hunting dashboard using the R3 scorecard recommended in the national plan.*

Implementation: GA DNR-WRD

Tasks:

- Provide agency leadership a better understanding of their customer base and license sales trends through time.
- Identify potential deficiencies in license sales systems that prevent timely access to important customer data and license sales trends critical to understanding the impacts of internal and external R3 efforts.
- See Appendix II for a dashboard example from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

- 12) Action:** *Implement participant tracking into every R3 program.*

Implementation: R3 Coordinator and GA DNR-WRD

Tasks:

- Use GA DNR-WRD online event system as the registration site for R3 programs. This system facilitates tracking the future license buying behaviors of program participants (via their GA DNR Customer ID #).
- Short-term – pilot this system with a few programs to ensure the functionality and use input from participants to make the system more user friendly.

- Long-term – encourage (possibly through incentives) all organizations with R3 programs to require registration for their events through the online event tracking system.
- Allow evaluation of program effectiveness to improve structure and design of R3 programs.
- Create a database of R3 participants to use for follow up surveys and offer future opportunities/programs based on their interests.
- Maintain a master list of programs that have been designated R3.
- Dedicate financial resources to the management of this system and the analysis of the data.

13) Action: *Integrate participant surveys into every R3 program.*

Implementation: All stakeholders with R3 programs - assistance from R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

- Short-term – provide generic editable templates (Appendix III & IV) of pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys for each general type of program. Incorporate specific steps to improve program delivery and content based on the survey feedback to fulfill participant needs (suggest customizing these surveys and hosting them online to increase efficiency of data collecting).
- Long-term – integrate surveys into the online event tracking system.
- Offer incentives to participants for completing surveys.

14) Action: *Require grant proposals or funding requests for R3 efforts to include integrated evaluation, defined target audiences, and outcome tracking.*

Implementation: All stakeholders that award money or resources for R3 efforts – assistance from R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

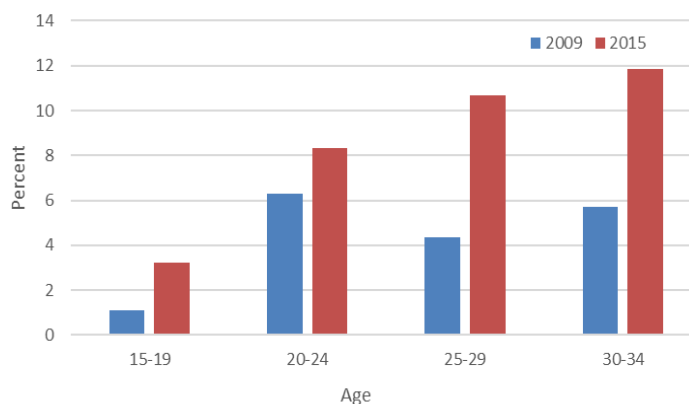
- Redesign request for proposals to encourage efforts to encompass the direction described under this plan.
- Increase buy-in to the Georgia R3 Initiative resulting in a more efficient data driven approach.

Strategy 6: Redefine target audiences

Justification: Nationally, R3 programs have generally targeted audiences already familiar with hunting and who are part of a hunting culture (children and spouses of those that hunt).¹ However, the real challenge and opportunity in R3 is to reach interested individuals who do not come from hunting families.^{15,18} The sample inventory of R3 programs in Georgia revealed that the majority of programs currently being implemented focused solely on youth. Thus, R3 efforts in Georgia are completely missing adults, including major demographics such as millennials, locavores, and urban audiences.

Millennials

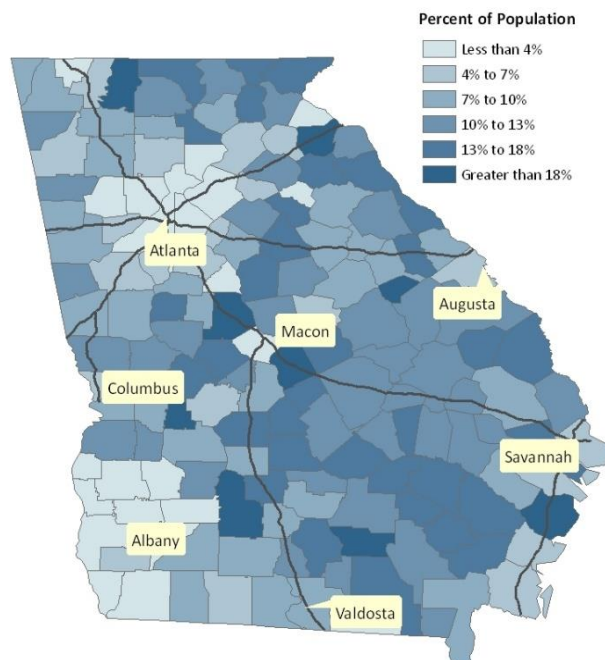
The millennial generation is the largest cohort in American history.⁹ The majority of millennial hunters are male, however there are more female hunters in the millennial age range than any other. The top reason for hunting lapse in this generation is going to college.^{17,22} Georgia hunters are younger than the national average,¹⁹ and millennials represent a large portion of the recent uptick in hunting participation.



The percentage of millennial hunters in 2009 (the beginning of the upward trend) versus 2015.

Urban

The rural traditions, values, and beliefs that have long formed the foundation of hunting in America seem to be shifting.⁷ Urban, suburban, and rural areas in Georgia house 21, 30, and 49 percent of the hunters, and 42, 25, and 32 percent of the population, respectively.¹⁹ In general, there is an inverse relationship with amount of urbanization and percentage of the population that hunt. Other studies have found nationwide trends to be similar and that only 13% of new hunters are coming from urban areas.^{20,22} As areas become more urban there is a dilution of the hunting traditions and the loss of social groups that participate.¹⁷ Additionally, the lowest approval rating for hunting comes from urbanized areas.¹⁴



The distribution of hunters as a percentage of the population at the county level.¹⁹

Locavores

The desire for quality food plays an important role in hunting participation.¹⁷ The locavore movement creates a golden opportunity to educate people about the benefits associated with consumption of wild game and demonstrate the benefits of hunting.²³ The majority of locavores have eaten game meat at least once, were interested in learning about meat preparation and conservation benefits, and would be willing to consider trying hunting.²⁴ Hunting should be marketed to locavores by exemplifying the benefits of the activity; 1) alternative food markets that influence policy and exemplify environmental stewardship, 2) health benefits from nutrition and exercise, 3) increased contact with nature and reduced stress, and 4) active participation in ecosystem management.²³ Even if targeting locavores does not increase license purchases, data suggest that it would benefit R3 by expanding social networks that support hunting.²⁴

In short: Georgia stakeholders need to reevaluate the current target audiences and select participant pools that allow the most efficient path to creating more hunters. This will involve piloting programs with redefined target audiences, evaluating the outcomes, and then refining the program (a data driven approach).

15) Action: *Shift current hunting R3 programs that target a youth-centered audience to a family-centered audience.*

Implementation: All stakeholders with R3 programs - assistance from R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

- Restructure current youth programs to engage the adults in the family unit which will ultimately facilitate the transportation, financials, and social support needed for youth to continue hunting without the aid of programs.
- Change the title and the terminology used in the program to reflect that it is a family program as opposed to a youth program.
- Link programs to existing family-oriented organizations (e.g., churches and home-schooling associations) to provide an extended social support network.
- Target NASP and other shooting teams where hunters are not the majority and place an emphasis on urban/suburban centers.

16) Action: *Pilot programs targeting locavores.*

Implementation: All stakeholders with R3 programs - assistance from R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

- Develop programs that target non-traditional locavore adult audiences and provide: 1) importance of hunting to conservation, 2) health benefits of eating

wild game, 3) mentored hunting opportunities, and 4) culinary session involving wild game.

- Pull participants from local farmer's markets, farm-to-table restaurants, and local publications, with an emphasis on urban/suburban centers.
- Resources and a complete guide for conducting a program for locavores can be found here: Locavore.Guide.
- A review of a pilot program conducted in Georgia can be found here: <https://www.qdma.com/field-fork-helps-locavores-become-hunters/>.

17) Action: *Pilot programs targeting millennials.*

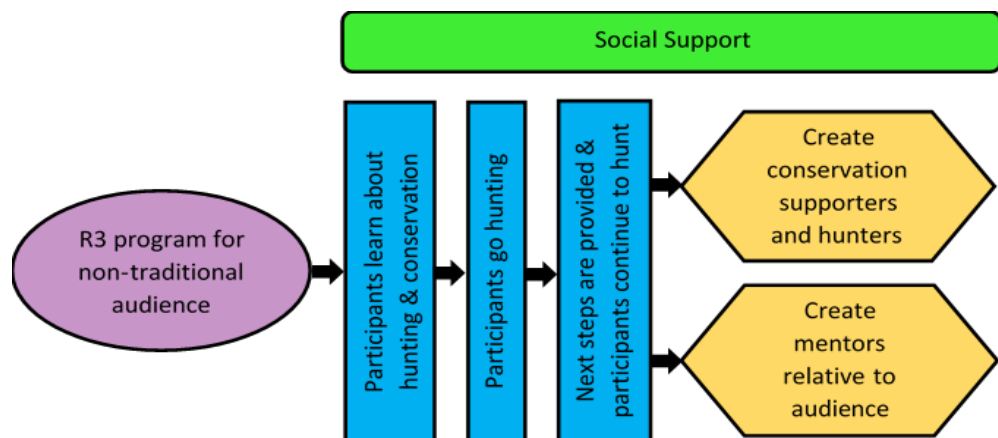
Implementation: All stakeholders with R3 programs - assistance from R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

- Target existing social groups when possible (e.g., professional associations and colleges), and use social media to advertise and communicate.
- Make information social media and mobile friendly (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.).
- If possible, select hunting locations that are cell service friendly to allow participants to stay in touch and utilize social media.
- Consider unconventional marketing techniques and place an emphasis on urban/suburban centers.

Note: When implementing the above action items, it will be crucial to 1) use mentors that are relevant to the targeted audience and 2) focus on guidelines and instruction, as opposed to political issues or cultural values.

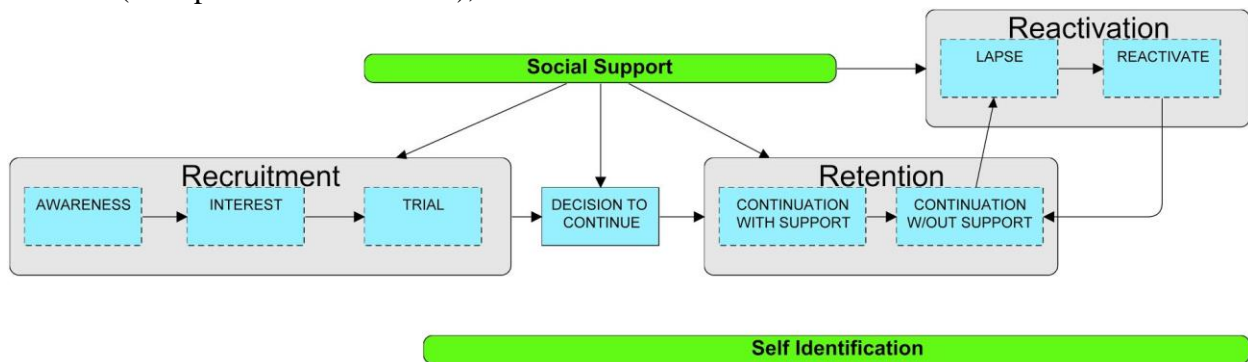
Using mentors completely relevant to the target audience will not always be possible initially, but can be accomplished in the second and third years of the program by utilizing past participants as mentors.



An example results chain (adapted from the Locavore Deer Hunting Results Chain [Locavore.Guide]) for an R3 program targeting a non-traditional audience. One of the end results identified is creating mentors relative to the target audience for use in future years.

Strategy 7: Additional structure changes needed for R3 programs

Justification: As mentioned previously, Georgia R3 stakeholders need to consider reevaluating the way they are currently structuring R3 efforts. Redefining target audiences is imperative, but providing programs and resources that span the full process of an individual's path to becoming a hunter (as depicted in the ORAM), will also be crucial.



The ORAM which breaks down the process/stages necessary for participants to self-identify as a hunter.

The majority of R3 programs inventoried in Georgia solely focus on the recruitment stage. It has been suggested that the most effective R3 efforts provide multiple contact opportunities over time to keep the new hunters engaged in the long term.^{1,3,18} To provide multiple contact opportunities and implement other program strategies detailed in this plan, qualified mentors are needed. A primary challenge of implementing R3 efforts is a shortage of available mentors.¹

In short: The ORAM should be used as a guide to combine expertise and resources to connect potential participants to multiple opportunities and move them through the necessary stages needed to become lifelong participants. Additionally, mentors need to be made available to all R3 programs regardless of organization affiliation.

18) Action: Create targeted approaches to promote pathways and next-steps.

Implementation: All stakeholders with R3 programs - assistance from R3 Coordinator

Tasks:

- Provide retention programs that pull participants from the database of people that have previously participated in a recruitment program to provide multiple contact opportunities (pending completion of Action 12).
- Provide reactivation programs that will pull lapsed hunters back into the fold (e.g., college or family friendly programs).
- Provide next steps at the end of every R3 program (e.g., information about hunting locations, direct links to other programs in their area).

- Provide self-learning tools at the end of every program (e.g., QDMA e-book, how-to videos, online information sources, e-mentors). It will be important to provide tools relevant to the target audience (e.g., millennial learning tools should be geared at mobile devices and social media).

19) Action: *Create a database of available mentors.*

Implementation: Mentor Committee

Tasks:

- Create a state-wide database of experienced mentors regardless of organization affiliation.
 - Encourage current and new volunteers to sign up (possibly via incentives; ask mentors what would incentivize them).
 - Encourage R3 program participants to become mentors in future years (see results chain under Strategy 6).
 - Filter database by skill set, location, age, and reasons for hunting. This will enable R3 programs to select local mentors who are relevant to the target audience.
 - Make the database available to stakeholders with R3 programs registered in the event system mentioned in Action 12.
- Ideas for the consideration of the committee:
 - Mentor contests open to mentors from all organizations (e.g., Mentor of the Year, Georgia Outdoor News Truck Buck for Mentors, a special lottery drawing accessible to mentors).
 - Mentor vetting system, mentor insurance, and protecting mentors from false accusations.
 - Provide special property access to the mentor and their mentee via state parks and voluntary public access money.
 - Highlight mentor stories through communications channels.

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